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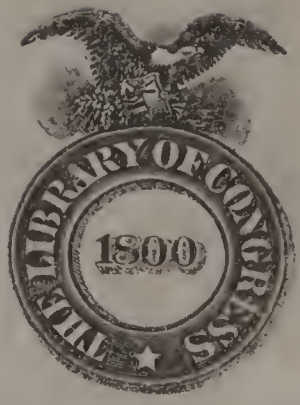
UNCLE ABE SAYS . . .

IUELLA KNOTT



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UNCLE ABE SAYS . . . . .

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BY

LUELLA KNOTT

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◆

MACON, GEORGIA
THE J. W. BURKE COMPANY

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TO ALL THE NIECES AND NEPHEWS WHO
DO OR DO NOT HAVE AN UNCLE ABE

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UNCLE ABE SAYS . . . . .

PHILOSOPHY

'Taint no use to grumble
'N frown 'n keep a frettin',
If you can't get the things you want,
Then, want the things you're gettin'.

The path you tread is much the same
As others is pursuin';
If you can't do the things you like,
Then, like the things you're doin'.

The world may have its sour folks,
But this will bear repeatin',
It won't take long for you to get
As sour as them you're meetin'.

There may be good folks far away,
You'd mighty like to tie to;
But if you ain't nigh folks you love,
Then, love the folks 'at's nigh you.

If things don't move just like they ought,
Keep movin' and a shovin';
And don't let nothin' interfere
With *likin' and a lovin'*.

PUBLIC OFFICE

If you're in the lumber business,
Run a farm or keep a store;
If you foller a perfession
With a ciard upon your door:
If you're runnin' of a saw mill,
Or a workin' turpentine;
From a peddlin' pins and needles
To the workin' of a mine,
No one keres to criticise you,
You may save or spend or lose;
You may squander all your dollars
Or may spend 'em if you choose.

Liberty is ever granted
To the pioneer or novice
Fer to use his own—exceptin'
When you're holdin' Public Office.
May the Lord have mercy on you,
Grant you all-sustainin' grace;

If you work and make your livin'
In this uninspirin' place.
For no matter what you're 'arnin'
You can never dare control it;
Save or spend it, bank or lend it,
Ever'body knows *you stole it!*

HIC'RY SHIRT AND CALICO

I sat by you this evenin'
In the fire's amber glow;
I held your hand, believin'
It was long and long ago.
Your little flowered calico
Was ironed smooth and clean,
Your shoes were tied with knotted bow,
The neatest ever seen.

A strange, un'arthly Somethin' wrapped
Itself 'round you and me;
Weird winds a broken window tapped,
That Night might look and see.
Lost phantoms of the Night peeped in
And saw sweet first-love's bliss;
Then fled, and vowed they hadn't seen
A gesture nor a kiss.

The darkness gleamed with joy alert
And Happiness bent low
On Innocence in hick'ry shirt
And flowered calico.
And though the song and speech of Love
Throughout the world is heard;
I still love best that sweet first-love
That never spoke a word.

That's why I sit so still, my Dear,
Throughout each winter's evenin';
Without a doubt, without a fear,
Just lovin' and believin'.
I like that strange, un'arthly thing
That wrapped itself around us;
Mute joy, that made the Silence sing
Before Pain ever found us!

THAT HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

Don't give me a house by the side of the road,
Where cars go honking by;
Though the men inside who honk and ride
May be far better than I.
I don't want to sit in the scorner's seat,
Nor hurl a cynic's ban;
But I don't have to stay on a paved highway
To be a friend to man.

I lived in a house by the side of the road
For three score years and ten;
And I'm here to swear I wouldn't live there
For a million dollars again.
For the next three score and ten I'll live
Where never a highway ran;
I'll laugh with the glad and weep with the sad
And still be a friend to man.

That man who lived by the side of the road
Could frame some rhythm glib,
But if he sang to the modern gang
He'd sure be telling a fib!
For no matter how much he loved man,
And shared his sorrow and song;
If now he abode by the side of the road,
He sure wouldn't love him long.

I love the weak and I love the strong,
But what can they give me pray,
If they romp and ride and laugh and chide
All night, and the livelong day?
And what can I give, if never alone,
Apart from the noise and strife?
If I'm never still I never can fill
The starving heart of life.

So, give me a house where I can hear
My still, small voices call;
Away from hordes of honking Fords
And prowlers great and small.
A house hid far from things that mar—
A quiet and choice abode;
Where I can live and pray and give,
Far from the side of the road.

Give me the cool, sweet stillness
Of a valley green and deep;
Or a lofty spot on Life's hill-top,
Where I can get some sleep.
A tangle of vine in the bright sunshine,
Where perfumed breezes blow;
Or a cozy nook by a running brook,
Where ferns and mosses grow.

Where roses twine and lilies shine
And perfumed violets hide;
If you give me this you may have the bliss
Of the man on the old road-side.
For I love the secret places,
Where sound is a sweet surprise;
Where thoughts grow like sweet roses,
And prayers like incense rise.

There are times I know for the multitudes,
And times to go apart;
But I love best the time to rest—
Communing with my heart.
Where the reverence of Silence
Prays for me and my abode:
"Dear God, don't *ever* let me live
In a house by the side of the road."

WALK RIGHT IN

I thought I seen you sort o' sneer
When you fust stopped and looked in here.
Well, this ole shanty's her'n and mine,
And whilst it mayn't be new nor fine,
I reckon she likes it as well as some
As owns a palace and calls it home.
The house ain't very big you see,
But's big enough for her and me;
An' another room in the kitchen shed
Where we can put a friend to bed.

The winder's bright with roses' bloom,
It used to be our Baby's room
An' she loved roses, white an' red,
We planted 'em right by her bed
So she could pick 'em, weak or strong,
Right th'u the winder, all day long.
She was *our* rose bud . . 'Scuse me Sir!
My voice will shake when I talk o' her.
She bein' the only one, you know,
'Twas extry hard to let her go.

My, but it's hard to realize
She was so cripple and undersize,
And she was nigh to twenty-one,
The day we woke and found her gone!
But after she went we smiled an' said
We'd use her chair an' room an' bed
For any stranger 'at might come th'u;
So, you see, there's plenty o'room for you.
The table's allers set for three,
So, it ain't no trouble for her nor me.

We jest pertend that the visitor
Was somehow sent to us from her,
And we ain't never yet refused
To give him the bed and room she used.
As I was sayin' the house ain't new,
It might look cheap to the likes o' you.
But the little woman you'll chance to see,
Would make any place jest right for me!
Even a shanty like this ole thing,
Jest seems to clap its hands an' sing.

There she goes now! . . . Did I hear you say
You never seen nobody smile that way?
That it's no wonder the roses shine?
That this is a HOME? Well sir, that's fine!
For though you're a stranger passin' th'u,
I'm glad she looks this way to you.
I said to myself when I seen that sneer:
"It'll melt as soon as he gets in here."
You jest can't he'p it an' I infer
The reason's hid in the heart o' her.

Sometimes, it seems we can't get straight,
Till we open some little ole picket gate
An' walk th'u a door where roses cling;
Then Stranger, we understand ever'thing.
It's quare how a troublesome burden flies
In the mellow glow of a woman's eyes;
How even a shanty's a cheerful goal
When warmed by a woman's sufferin' soul . . .
I'm glad the table's set for three,
An' there's room for you an' her an' me.

A BEERIN' ON THE LEGISLATORS

Who Gave the Tax on Beer to Our Schools in 1933

This egecation, onct I thought
Was mighty over-rated;
But now, says I, jest pile it high,
And git 'em egecated.

These Legislators dug their votes
With sharpened campaign axes,
And 'lowed if we'd elect 'em,
They'd cut down all our taxes.

And bless the Lord, see what they done!
They left no alteration
A beerin' on the subject, but
To drink for our salvation.

This 3 and 2 per cent they say
Is got to pay for knowledge;
(And whur's the father who'd refuse
To send his son thu college?)

We got to pay expenses
For all this rant and rulin';
It's sad to think, but *we must drink*
For kids to git their schoolin'.

I've drunk to my capacity,
And still, unsatiated;
If drink I must, I swear I'll bust
Before Jim's egecated.

"Strengthen the weak!" I dare to squeak,
"A spike'll do it quicker;
If 'tis my fate to egecate,
Then, turn this beer to liquor."

If I must drink to make 'em think
And fill their heads with knowledge,
Let's knock old Volstead in the head
And send 'em all thu college!

Eighteenth repeal with woe or weal
Has brought this swell occasion;
So, have a swill and let us kill
Such rotten legislation.

LEG-acies

'Most ever'where we chance to look
The scenery is maddenin',
For here and there and ever'where
Our trades is all skedaddlin'
    On legs!

Big, shinin' cars and ladies' duds,
Grass seed and listerine;
Hotels and schools and iron tools
Stalk vividly serene
    On legs!

Silk hose and patent medicines,
Tobacco and preserves,
Linoleum and petroleum
Are all proclaimed with curves
    Of legs!

Dog pills and dainty breakfast foods,
White collars, ties and hats,
Roach poison hops with lollipops,
Tooth paste and base ball bats
    On legs!

When cities wish to draw a crowd
To advertise their section,
A vast parade of girls is made
Exploiting the perfection
    Of legs!

We're always lookin', listenin'
For a different *al a mode;*
But motor cars and candy bars
Go down the same old road
    On legs!

We laugh and sigh indulgently
With others in the fight,
While we review some women who
Would like to copyright
    Their legs!

But since they're such a common thing,
And ever'body has 'em,
We'll just observe each dainty curve
Without a moral spasm
    On legs!

PSYCHOPATHIC BLUES

Dear Kindreds,

I have took the blues,
(The Psychopathic kind)
It wasn't left for me to choose
The place to be consigned.
The doctors jest agreed that I
Should have a little change;
'Cause all you folks was flyin' high
And actin' mighty strange.

The reason why they fetched me here
For rest and recreation,
Is jest because your mental flaws
Disturbed my cerebration.
I grieved about the mental state
Of all the folks I knew,
The awful and outrag'ous fate
That seemed to threaten you.

And since I'm here I wonder how
You missed the psychic blues;
(It's quite absurd, but I have heard
You had no brains to lose.)
I guess some crook'ed doctor failed
To open up your brain box,
Or you'd a been completely nailed
By this *dementia precox.*

The whole perfession fought and bled
To take me for a ride;
And that is why I'm here instead
Of all the folks outside.
But don't you think because I'm blue,
My *brain* is gettin' hazy;
If I knew less than most of you,
They'd sure pernounce me *crazy!*

But since I'm here, I'll rest a bit
And think about the weather,
(If you was here, we'd love to sit
And jest be blue together.)
But since they haven't caught you yet,
I can't be very choosey;
I'll jest play dumb until you come,
Your's,
Psychopathic Blusey.

O, AUNT ELIZA!

Aunt Eliza is a W. C. T. U.
The finest little dame you ever knew.
She's a tem'rance organizer,
A Volstead sympathizer,
And I love my Aunt Eliza—sure I do!
She's an artful and a tolerant disguiser,
Even though she is a booze antagonizer;
Her fruit-cake's so delicious,
It makes us all suspicious
That the flavor is fictitious,
Aunt Eliza!

And though she is a noble, Christian dame,
I fear she has back-slidden just the same.
She not only used the stuff,
But her answer was a bluff,
She called the flavor by some other name!

She's as sweet as any flower—Aunt Eliza,
But she let that *cider sour* (bold devisor),
And the fruit-cake she compounded
Wasn't temp'rate as it sounded,
It had something that re-bounded,
Aunt Eliza!

She says I may have sp'ilt her reputation,
Indulgin' in such spurious beration;
She says she's no back-slider,
But a loyal law-abider,
And she *didn't* keep that cider on probation.
Of course, I shouldn't dare to be advisor
To any one as good as Aunt Eliza,
But should I eat her booze,
The W. C. T. U's
My pledges would refuse,
Sweet Aunt Eliza!

THOSE HOUSEHOLD CARES

At last, the house is spick and span,
And everything is in its place!
Each item that belongs to me,
Is just where it belongs to be,
And all the home machinery
Moves on at even pace . . . .

And yet, it's kind 'a lonesome like,
The silence sort o' stifles me!
I'm lookin', list'nin' all day long
For things I used to think were wrong—
I miss the sharps in Life's old song,
And wish 'twas like it used to be.

I'd like to see a chair up-turned,
And dirty tracks upon the stair;
A stain, where some one spilled the tea . . . .
Lord, how much longer will it be
Before those kids come back to me,
To make what *fools* call *household cares!*

THE CHARGE OF THE RIGHT BRIGADE

When Female Legs was on Parade

There's lots o' things to please the eye,
In this ole world of ours;
There's leafy trees, and sea and sky,
And bees and birds and flowers:
There's rad'ant color everywhere,
And quiet tints a glowin',
There's tune and tone and harmony,
On every sound-wave flowin'.

There's many a grateful eye and heart,
This artistry enjoyin',
Appreciatin' every part,
That Nature is employin'.
But there's one thing that mars the plan
Of all this beautifyin';
It grieves the heart o' every man,
And sets his soul a sighin'.

Yea, there's one thing, we're satisfied
No *mortal eye* can please;
One thing which *can't* be beautified,
And that is: - - - WIMEN'S KNEES!
There's purty faces, feet and hands,
For Artists' contemplation;
But purty knees warn't in the plans
Of Eden's first creation.

We wish we'd never been advised
Of such anomalism,
But knees has been so advertised,
They can't shy criticism.
Such knotted and unsightly things
Should have remained a myst'ry,
But each exposure Fashion brings,
Must be a part of hist'ry.

We'd pat ole Nature on the head,
And disregard her twinges;
If only wimen could be led
To hide their bony hinges.
We'd rather think as once we thought,
And shun this vain correption;
That Beauty is compoundly wrought
With no abstruse exception.

We'd be at peace with ups and downs,
From every grief delivered,
If wimen would let out their gowns,
Until their knees were kivered.
We'd rest our eyes for one brief while,
If they'd perform this duty;
Then, we would sit and look and smile
And thank the Lord for Beauty.

WELLS OUTLINED

(From the elaborate scenario of man's descent from the ape in Volume I of Well's Outline of History.)

"This is pure guessing", "it would seem",
"As yet, we do not know;"
"But we suppose" and "they suppose",
"And we assume it so."
"'Tis commonly asserted",
"Though many disagree!"
"But still it must and may have been",
"And it appears to be."

"It prob'ly was", and "prob'ly is",
No facts have interfered!
"It may or it may not have been",
"We guess" and "it appeared".
"At least these things are said to be,"
"And we assume it so;"
"Inextricably mixed," of course,
"As yet, we do not know."

But certainly "it is assumed"
That is was more or less
Than "what it seems," and "possibly
It was not," but "we guess"
That it was so, for "it appeared"
Just as we feebly mumbled;
"It must have been," and yet we feel
"Confessedly jumbled."

"It's all so fogged," we "get mixed up,"
"Yet, it appears to be,"
"And prob'ly was" and "may have been,"
"Though many disagree."
But "almost certainly, 'tis true,"
"Though doubtful, we confess;"
"But 'tis supposed" and "said to be,"
"As far as we can guess."

Assumptions and uncertainties,
Vague doubts and mysteries,
In bold "out-line," some men define
A famous history!
"Appears" and "seems" and "probables"
Agree to disagree,
Till they have wrought a common thought;—
"What fools we mortals be!"

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES

The Female of the species,
So deadly in her might,
Is proving, in these latter days,
That Kipling's charge was right.
With heart and soul, enlisted,
And hands that never shirk,
She's here and there and everywhere
In every kind of work.
No matter where you chance to go,
You never, never fail
To find this deadly species
Competing with the Male.

With latent energies released,
Her blazing head-lights shine;
And to her deadly skill, we see
The lively Male resign.
She makes a fine policeman,
She handles trucks and cars;

She runs for every office
Beneath the sun and stars.
She's judging saint and sinner,
She's alderman and mayor;
Complacently, she speaks the word,
And all the men obey her.

In city and in county,
And all affairs of state,
She spots the politicians,
And wipes 'em off the slate.
O, Kipling was a prophet,
He knew the truth, and wrote it,
When other males, irresolute,
Refused to even quote it.
In business, sports and markets,
Her male contestants find,
That she contributes quite enough
To occupy his mind.

A few have swiped his morals,
His races and his bets,
They help him drink his whiskey,
And smoke his cigarettes.

So even in his vices,
'Tis very plain to see,
The female is more deadly
Than any male could be;
There was a time when people thought
Old Kipling was a liar;
But now the dame controls the game,
And no one dares defy her.

Sagacious in finances,
She mingles with the mob;
She runs her home efficiently
And holds on to her job.
She keeps on raisin' children,
She still knows how to spank,
The torch-light of her motherhood
Flames in the hightest rank.
If Ruddy could repeat his theme,
The thing for him to see is
That even with her writin' pen
She's deadlier than he is.

MADE ON EARTH

First, he took her to a party,
He didn't really mean to,
But when one has so many friends,
Such things are always seen to.
There was some special reason why
He called on her next evening,
And then, some trivial accident
Delayed his timely leaving.

There was another party soon,
(He was so unsuspecting!)
He took her there, he took her home,
No spider's web detecting.
He called again, and yet again,
Thinking each, was the last time;
But childish eyes and innocence
Make sweet and harmless pastime.

One fatal night, she wept, poor child!
He kissed her while he tarried;
She put her arms around his neck . . .
And next day they *were married!*
A few are made in heav'n, no doubt,
Where angel hosts abet them;
But most young dames fire their own flames
For fear God will forget them!

THE BEAUTIFUL NOW

While other folks dream of things that seem
In the Past or the Yet-to-be;
I would sing my lay to the present day,
And all that it brings to me.
For while there are sighs to darken the skies,
And tears that will sometimes flow;
I would lay no flow'rs on past dead hours,
Nor joys that I used to know.

To the present time I would sing my rhyme—
The joys that are mine to-day,
Nor travel afar from the things that are,
To things that are far away.
I'd open my eyes to the nearest prize,
And pray: "Lord, teach me how
To find completeness and treasure the sweetness
That lives in the Beautiful NOW!"

GONA

When first I came a stranger here
I said: This can not be
The language I have learned so well,
These people talk to me
In words and phrases all unknown,
Unheard of heretofore;
They drop the middle syllables,
And endings quite ignore.
There's no such thing as i-n-g,
And pronouns have no case;
But what impressed me most of all
Was Mr. Gona's grace.

For weeks, I wondered why it was,
That every man I met
Said: "I'm a gona . . . . I'm a gona . . . "
I was quite beset
By Gonas of most varied kinds,
A family most diverse;

'Twas gona this and gona that
And gona bad and worse.
And every man in all the land
Was gona, gona do;
Each woman was a gona . . .
And all the children too.

My head was fairly in a whirl
And ere I half suspected
The microbe germinated,
And I too, was infected.
O, awful transformation!
Can it be really true
I'm gona get demoralized
And gona talk like you?
Belov'ed English brothers,
Is your gona on *my* brain?
And am I gona be and do
And gona go insane?

Ah yes, already I can feel
My tongue a' gettin' thick;
And oh, I'm go and know
Provincial rhetoric!
I'm gona blame and put to shame
The boastful egotist;
I'm gona see if I can be
A fine *grammarianist!*
I'm gona go and gona show
You, as my power increases,
That though a novice, I'm a gona
Beat you all to pieces!

THOSE WHO SERVE

There are those who serve in the valley,
And those who serve on the hill;
There are forces too on the mountainside,
United in strength of will.
There are those who serve with bringing
Life's sweets to the passing throng;
There are those who serve with singing
And gladden the world with song.

But the greatest service rendered,
That will longest stand and thrive;
Whose marble never crumbles
And whose canvas is alive,
Is she who sings sweet lullabies,
Played on the heart's own strings;
While a soul divine, immortal,
Awakens as she sings.

And whether she serve on the mountain
Or down in the vale below,
Her work is an art eternal,
The greatest that man can know.
Wherever the sun shines brightest,
Or the lights burn low and dim;
She's moulding and shaping and building
A Living Temple for Him!

THAT FAMILY TREE

A woman once was much endowed
With wond'rous length of tongue,
And praises of her pedigree
From morn till night were sung.
She told what mighty things were done
By gifted men of note,
Who hung upon her family tree
In ages far remote.
So famous was her lineage
And aristocracy,
That she could talk of nothing else
Save genealogy.

Her consanguineous Grands and Greats
Were wonderful to see,
And gifted aunts and uncles
Hung upon her family tree.
No wonder that she looked at it
And talked of it all day,

And naught was right unless 'twas done
Some royal cousin's way!
For surely, there was never yet
A tree so grand and high
As this immense, gigantic thing
Whose branches scraped the sky.

But sad to say, though very dim,
Suspended full in sight,
There hung a poor, moronic limb,
A brainless parasite.
A dangling and contemptuous thing
From Bragadosia school;
Who hadn't even sense enough
To know she was a fool.
For never once had she displayed
One evidence of thought.
For she lived only on the things
Her Great-grand-daddies wrought.

Ancestors' brains don't think for us,
Nor are their deeds a credit;
Some things are always evident
Without our having said it.
If they were true aristocrats
We'll never have to tell it,
And if their blue blood flows in us,
We'll never have to yell it.
Most famous family trees have grown
On dangerous avalanches;
And have you ever seen one yet
But had some rotten branches?

ODE TO THE OWL

Art thou the Andalusian devil's bird,
Drinking the mid-night oil from sacred shrines?
Or the embodiment of evil stirred
By Malagasian hands in mystic lines?

Perhaps thou art the Ash bird, Cirietta,
Minerva's spirit, holding wisdom's creed;
Hooting to quaking hearts thy arietta,
Symbol of Athens' every noble deed!

Or sprite of wisdom, reading lighted pages?
Sure, thou art he of whom we long have heard,
The Knowing One, quaint Tutor of the ages,
—Chevache, sapient emblematic bird!

Hooting throughout the world, two hundred strong
In species! Superstitions cling
About their feathered tribe and screeching song,
We tremble when thy ululations ring.

Stinx Flammea, or genus, *Asio,*
An owl's an owl, and there is naught can calm you;
When thou art nigh, though Christian, I would cry:
"Skedaddle imp, and *quit that hooting,* dalm you!"

IN A LIBRARY

These are my friends—the people in these books,
They like to live in all these cozy nooks
Or sleep all day upon these dusty shelves,
—We have such good times, here all by ourselves!
We take long, lovely strolls or travel far
To yawning depths or some far-distant star,
Walking and talking; yet we never tire,
Because we just sit still right by the fire.

They seem more like real people ought to be
And somehow, dote on entertaining me.
E'en if a villain steps on pages I peruse
And tells me things my standards must refuse,
He still is helpful and sufficient kind
To feed some hungry corner of my mind;
And oh, he is the most alluring crook
Who ever lived outside or in a book.

They're wond'rous kind and never look askance
At any one, nor give a scornful glance.
Enamoured with their weird, enchanting spell,
I sit dumbfounded at the things they tell.
Their presence gives me hope and confidence,
And keeps my faith in old-time common sense.
I guess that's why I love the mystic call
Of folks who never really lived at all.

HAD I BUT KNOWN

Heavens! If I had only saved
The rhymes I wrote when ten years old;
The way to fame I might have paved
With verses sung and sent and sold.
Devoid of knowledge, thought or care,
I wrote for better or for worse;
And many a foot was there to spare
In verbose lines of childish verse.

Sweet Ego shone through every flaw,
And in each bold asseveration,
Poetic license was my law,
Amour propre, my condemnation.
My outraged muses stood in line
And felt insulted as I wrote,
And Horea's three, or Ascra's nine,
I choked each sweet poetic throat.

Ah, genius treads a tricky way,
Deceived by many a thorny lash;
I'd be a millionaire to-day
If I had only saved that trash!
For had I only kept the stuff,
It would not now be deemed a curse;
Of funds and fame I'd have enough
Had I but known I *wrote free verse!*

One of Uncle Sam's most popular Posters during the World War was the picture of a man standing inside a window looking out on a regiment of soldiers marching by. Printed in large letters across the top of the Poster, were the following words:—

WHICH SIDE OF THE WINDOW ARE YOU ON?

The Inside is bright with Love's golden light,
And warm with Love's sweet-scented breath;
The Outside is cold, and dangers untold
Are calling to darkness and death.
Which side of the window are you on,
On the side where the embers glow?
Where Luxury stands with wide open hands
To bless you wherever you go?

Are you on the side where the Nobodies hide,
While Duty is calling to you?
Do you look through the glass while the Somebodies pass

And wish you were Somebody too?
God pity your shame and cancel your name
From the list of America's own,
If you stay on the side where the Nobodies hide,
And live like a Nobody's son!

In the sweet-scented glow an invisible foe
Is threat'ning your honor and name;
Death's messengers ride in the dangers outside,
But Death is less deadly than shame!
Which side of the window are you on—
The side where the heart is strong?
Where manhood and might contend for the right,
Though the way may be weary and long?

Are you on the side where the Somebodies ride,
The forces of Wrong to defy?
Do you look through the glass at some smiling lass
Who waves you a loving goodbye?
Are you eager to fight for God and the Right,
For the World and America's own?
Then, live on the side where the Somebodies ride,
Or *die* like a Somebody's son!

There's a window of Life, by which everyone stands,
The Inside is comfort and ease;
The Outside is rife with the battles of Life,
Whose struggles with Wrong never cease.
But Victory's star is shining afar,
Inspiring the brave and the true;
There are always two sides which the window
divides,
I wonder on which side are you!

LIFE'S ALONENESS

Each day they're found the world around—
Two souls so closely mated,
That friend nor foe would ever know
That they were separated.
They walk each day one common way,
Each clime and age have seen them
So near, so dear, 'twould never appear
There were leagues and leagues between them.
They meet the strife and the joy of life
In fair and stormy weather,
With a common aim, and a common name,
And yet—they are not together!

For one denies to his inner eyes
The silent and sweet beholding
Of visions that show the color and glow
Of the unseen world's unfolding.
Two worlds exist, and the one has missed
The unseen world's creation;

In the Seen and Known he lives alone,
And seeks his consolation.
The other has seen the gulf between,
And crossed the mystic river,
Where the great Unknown and the great Unseen
Are seen and known forever!

In the border strand of the Promised Land
One stands with bold decision;
His feet have found life's Holy Ground,
His eyes have seen the vision.
Together each day they walk their way
In conscious isolation,
Each holding a part of his mind and heart
In holy separation.
And though they stand ever hand in hand
In sweet and seeming oneness,
Each lives alone in a world his own,
On the Mount of Life's Aloneness!

TANGLEWOOD

I love every leaf on your vine-shrouded trees,
And every wild blossom that bends in the breeze;
Your sweet honeysuckle, your tangled bamboo,
And the Cherokee roses that twine about you:
Your dark, crooked shadows, your one-sided trees,
Your stern resolution to grow as you please.

Your turbulent angles, so rugged and strong
Are forums rugose for the mocking bird's song;
Where each fragrant zephyr a melody brings,
As perched in a perfume, the mocking bird sings.
I love you because you have never asked man
For any instruction or orthodox plan.

In bold, aberrating confusion you show
The landscape adorners how things ought to grow.
In sweet, dreamy silence and soft, woodsy mood
You're rest and nestful, my green Tanglewood!
From each knotty base to your trees' lofty dome,
I love you, because . . Well, because you are HOME!

THE WANDER TRAIL

I started up the Wander-trail,
The weird and windin' Wander-trail;
It twisted, curved and turned about,
Ran back and forth and in and out,
Until it seemed on beaten track
To meet itself a'comin' back,
But on I wandered, soon to learn
The reason for each curve and turn
In the windin' Wander-trail.

It curved around the roughness,
The weird and windin' Wander-trail,
It shied around the thorny hedge,
And bare escaped the rocky ledge,
It fondly circled round and round,
Until the safest path was found,
And ever formed for you and me,
A foot-hold safe and danger-free,
The weird and windin' Wander-trail.

O, beauteous path of sun and shade,
O, lovely flower-decked way;
Who wisely turned you in and out,
And found the safest, surest route,
By laughing streams that wind and flow
Just where the brightest flowers grow,
Who went before, o'er hill and dale,
And laid the windin' Wander-trail
For others and for me?

I pause upon the windin' way,
I listen! An old, old tale
Is told to me. I strain my eyes
To royal heights of sunny skies,
And lo! the many who wail and weep,
Climb all alone the rocky steep.
No singing birds nor flowers gay,
No dancing streams attend their way,
For they have missed the Wander-trail!

The Wander-trail is windin',
As it upward bends its way;
It oft seems comin' back again,
As if 'twould beat its track again,
But up it winds, through dangers rife—
The windin' Wander-trail of Life.
And those who follow each curve and turn,
Will reach the heights for which they yearn
On the hill-tops far away.

It curves around the roughness,
Life's mystic, windin' Wander-trail!
It twists and curves and turns about,
Winds back and forth, and in and out,
Until it forms for you and me,
A foot-hold safe and danger-free.
For over hill and rocky dale,
One went before and laid the trail,
Life's mystic, windin' Wander-trail.

And some have found the Wander-trail,
Life's mystic windin' Wander-trail;
But many have missed the windin' beat,
And struggle alone with tired feet,
O'er rugged steep and rocky way,
Seeking the heights of a sunny day.
But though such struggles may oft prevail
I'd rather go by the Wander-trail,
Life's mystic, windin' Wander-trail.

A TYPICAL PRAYER

Lord, send us rain!
The thirsty, pregnant Earth is white and dry.
Dead children on her heaving bosom lie.
Seared winds, relentless blow the juiceless trees,
And strange, unquenching fires lurk in the breeze.
Gray, fruitless hill and endless, arid plain
Cry out for rain!

Lord, send us rain!
But send it slow enough to soak in well,
We would not have our lakes and rivers swell
To floods, nor have our gardens washed away,
Nor drowned and seed we planted yesterday.
We like the down-pour to be safe and sane
When You send rain.

Lord, send us rain!
But we prefer You'd send it just at night;
We like our day-time to be clear and bright.
And Lord, take care and send not too much sun
On plantain lily, rhododendron;
Marshmellow, gentian and sturdy grain
Need more of rain

Than lavender,
Alyssum, campion, pansy and the rose;
And in drought, helianthemem better grows.
Then, there are times, when just a purple haze
Is what we'd rather have for picnic days.
Suppose You keep a list, dear Lord, and then
Send what each asks,

Amen!

THE CAST-AWAY

She was dead and nobody came to moan,
No loved one lingered near;
In the coffin shop she lay alone
And nobody shed a tear.
Somebody came in the silent night - -
When she lay so still and cold and white,
When never a trace of her sin she bore—
To look at her sad, sweet face once more.

Somebody came—her brothers in sin,
They crowded around the bier
And gazed at the fragile form within,
But nobody shed a tear.
Nobody cared that she was gone,
For the only friends whom she had known
Had never a tear to shed—
So, nobody mourned that she was dead.

They knew as they stood in the silence there
And gazed at the poor wan face,
Of censure and blame they had no share
Nor sting in the dire disgrace.
They still might stand with a head erect,
And never lack for the World's respect;
For living or dead, they still might claim
The best of friends and a virtuous name.

But she whose life they had helped to blight
Lacked even a place to die;
And the earth, itself, refused a site
For a grave in which to lie.
She was carried out to the Potter's field
In the early morning hours,
And nobody followed the lonely bier,
Nor strewed the grave with flowers.

The twitter of birds was the funeral dirge,
While the sobbing winds made moan;
And the dew-drops wept for the child who slept
Outcast, forsaken, alone.
The stubborn sod and merciless clod
Thumped into the gapping ground,
But none who passed a stone could cast
At the lonely, red clay mound.

PRO AND CON

Take all your pictures down! (said Mr. Fad.)
That bric-a-brac and all your treasures too;
Those precious little trinkets you have had
So long, they have become a part of you!
That quaint old china vase, that old gray bust,
The Gleaners on the wall, shall be no more;
That wonderful old silver must not be
Where eyes of others or your own may see,
Lock it secure behind an opaque door.
Such little nothings as you now display
Are quite unseemly, vulgar and *passe!*

This is my dwelling place! (said Mrs. Holmes)
My walls, my shelves, and 'tis myself must say
Whether the artists enter, sculptors speak
Or Heart's sweet sentiment may stay.
Outside, the skies are hung with pictures rare,
Earth's every wall and shelf are decorated;
If Nature makes such ponderous mistake,
I dare the same in my small world to make,
Her taste within my home is emulated.
These little nothings which I dare display
Are sacred Memories of Life's yesterday.

I WONDER

If no one knew that you and I
Performed the loving deed,
If no one knew whose hand supplied
The want of those in need;
If no one knew and no one cared
Whether we of our bounty spared,
And no one knew or praised our name—
Would we perform it just the same?

If friends should doubt and misconstrue
The motives of the good we do,
And persecute us day by day
By all that they could do and say:
If censure in her scorn should rise
Our every effort to despise—
Would we perform the loving deed
And help supply our brother's need?

Ah, wherein dwells the sweet desire?
What motives do our work inspire?
Would you and I so joyful be
If there were none to know or see,
And none to praise the good we do?
Would you and I be just as true—
If no one knew?

THE STATESMAN

What of the man who, with heart sincere,
And courage undaunted, hath entered the fight?
Who dares *to be true* without favor or fear,
And always and ever upholdeth the Right?
Who giveth his name and his good reputation
That he may perform what the people despise,
Who loses himself for the good of the nation,
And buries himself, that the people may rise?
What of the man who hath counted it gain
To lose, and to welcome the cup he imbibes?
To triumph o'er pain, and to live on a plane
Where none *dare approach him,* to offer him bribes?

DEAR LITTLE GIRL IN CALICO

Dear little girl in calico,
Shy little girl that we used to know;
Sweet and simple and pure and true,
I wonder where they've taken you!
It's been so long since we saw you pass,
Spry little, shy little calicoed lass!
With down-cast eyes so clear and blue,
What would we give for a glimpse o' you!

With never a dream of a silken gown,
Dear little girl with curls of brown
Tied at the back with a ribbon bow,
Lost little lass of the long-ago,
Surely, you're not so far away,
But that you'll come again some day!
Pure as you were in the long-ago,
Little spring garden in calico.

THE OLD YEAR DIES

The Old Year dies to-night!
  Choice flow'rs are brought
And laid upon his silent heart
  With kindly thought.
Around the crepe-sheathed bier,
  Men softly tread;
And lay their offerings of love
  Upon the dead!
The Old Year cannot see
  The flowers they bring;
Nor hear the words of love,
  They speak and sing.

Men grow old with the year!
  So, let us give
Our love and sympathy and cheer,
  While yet they live.
The end will come so soon!
  No year is long!

There's little time for us to prove
That we are strong.
The New will soon be Old.
The many, few;
So, let us haste and prove to-day
That we are true.

The New Year's born to-night!
And ere its birth,
Let's bring our offering of flow'rs
To Time and Earth!
Let us thro'out the year,
More softly tread;
Nor wait to lay our flow'rs
Upon The Dead.
Let fragrance fill the air
Let kindly deeds appear;
Let us more kindly think and speak,
Thro'out the year.

THANKSGIVING

We thank Thee, Lord, for *everything*—
For sun and shade, for clouds and rain;
For friends and foes, for grief and woes;
For sickness, health and loss and gain.

We thank Thee for the hand that leads
Into the mid-day or the night;
For peace and strife, for death and life,
For doubt and error, truth and light.

We thank Thee for the faith that KNOWS
Far more than senses can discern;
For bloom and blight, for wrong and right,
That teach the lessons we must learn.

Not that we wholly understand
Just how these clashing things combine
To work for good and brotherhood
Of children, who are truly Thine.

But O, we thank Thee that we *know*
The great Unknown, and that we see
The great Unseen, that lies between
Our feeble, grouping souls and Thee!

WHEN YOU PASSED BY

I was sad to-day,
When you passed my way;
But joy and gladness thrilled me through
The moment I caught a glimpse of you!
Strains of music and soulful song
Filled the air as you moved along,
Coming, I know not how nor why,
Just at the moment you passed by.

When faith was weak,
I heard you speak;
And lo, your faith in God and men
Revived my own dead faith again.
Once more I stand unfettered, free!
Because you passed so close to me.
The Past is dead, all things are new,
Since I have turned to follow you.

LINES ON A CALENDAR

I'm sending three-hundred and sixty-five days,
Hoping that you may find them
All lambent and blue and every one new,
With a big sun shining behind them.
Take each as it comes, whatever they bring—
Whatever they're holding of sadness;
For each day will bring some song you can sing
With a measure of joy and gladness.

A year full of days—not a *day full of years,*
The Giver of good is bestowing;
What treasures they hold, what wealth manifold,
In radiant potency glowing.
They are ours to use as each of us choose,
Whatever they're holding of gladness;
Through losses and gains we know He ordains
To bless us with even the sadness.

Though mountains may tower and dark clouds
lower,
The heart is no stronger for pining;
There's always a sun—or the *day couldn't come,*
So, don't ever doubt it is shining.
Each twenty-four hours hold marvelous powers,
If filled with a measure of praise;
So, be careful of spending this gift I am sending,
—This wonderful, year full of days!

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